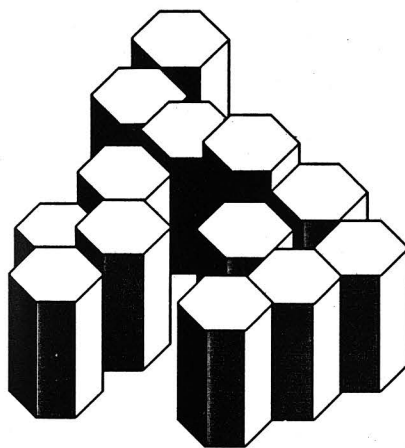


**BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR IRISH STUDIES
*NEWSLETTER***



**British Association
for Irish Studies**

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The *Newsletter* exists to provide a voice for, communication between, and information to the membership of the British Association for Irish Studies. Apart from reports by the Officers of the Association the views expressed in the *Newsletter* are not necessarily those of the British Association for Irish Studies.

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EDITORIAL

The now traditional editorial apology for the late appearance of the *Newsletter* is once again in order; I hope that the bumper issue of the *Newsletter* which it prefaces will make it more acceptable. As well as now established features of the *Newsletter*, this issue continues the trend of the Summer 1989 issue by having a variety of special reports, including that by Alan Morton on the relationship between Irish Studies and sociology. This piece will, I hope, provoke readers into considering not just the specific issue addressed by the article, but the wider context in which it is set of the relationship between Irish Studies and the variety of academic disciplines which could either contribute to a widely defined version of Irish Studies or within the margins of which there is room for an Irish orientation. Readers' comments on these matters, and on any other matters raised in this issue or within the sphere of Irish Studies generally are, as always welcomed.

Many readers with an interest in Irish writing will have been saddened by the death of Patrick Rafroidi. M. Rafroidi played an important role in the development of Irish Studies in France. He was the founder and editor-in-chief of the bilingual journal *Etudes Irlandaises* and a founding member of the French Society for Irish Studies (SOFEIR) with which the British Association for Irish Studies has recently been establishing links. He will be greatly missed.

Finally, just as we were going to press we learnt of Tom Arkell's decision to resign from the Executive Committee of the Association on health grounds. The committee have accepted his resignation with reluctance, extend their thanks on behalf of the members for his contribution to the Association, and wish him well for the future.

DEADLINE FOR SUMMER ISSUE: 1st May 1990

ADVICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

The *Newsletter* will publish material on any aspect of Irish Studies and on the work and activities of any organisation or institution which may be of interest to the membership of the British Association for Irish Studies. Contributors should submit material for consideration to the editor at the address given in the list of Committee Members. Reports of Conferences should be 500-600 words long. Items for the Special Reports section can be longer than this but should normally not exceed 1,000 words. The editor reserves the right to cut any material submitted should pressure of space or other considerations require this.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

REPORT FROM CHAIRWOMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

The activities of the Association as a whole are set out in the very full report of the Executive Director below and the work of the Association's various sub-committees are also reported on in this issue. To avoid the risk of repetition we will therefore confine ourselves to stressing the one topic which bears much repetition: fundraising. The financial situation of the Association as shown in the Treasurer's report is a curious one. Our achievements so far have been made possible in large part by the generosity of the various bodies which have sponsored us. Each time we succeed in expanding our financial base the funds are dedicated to a particular project, which means that the Association lives hand-to-mouth. For this reason we are devoting most of our time to the continued effort to raise sufficient funding for the Association.

Ruth Dudley Edwards, Chairwoman
Jim O'Hara, Vice Chairman

TREASURER'S REPORT

As evidenced by reports in this and previous *Newsletters*, the Association has been involved in developing Irish Studies across a broad range of activities - sixth-form lectures in Northern Ireland; Irish language courses, the Institute of Linguists' Irish language examination; the Joint Education Programme in association with the Institute of Irish Studies at the University of Liverpool; the Soar Valley Conference and also the Association's own biennial conference and Annual General Meeting at which the audited accounts for 1988-89 were presented and approved. All the above activities - and others - depend on funding and, as previously acknowledged, the Association has been supported by a number of bodies without whose aid the Association could not function. Those who have provided financial support for the Association are the Department of Education and Science, and the Department of Education and Science Northern Ireland whose funding permitted the initiation of the present range of activities, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who provided the funds for a visit to the annual conference of the American Conference of Irish Studies - one which not only extended the range of the Association's important network of contacts but also led to the grant from the Ireland Fund, a grant which has supported the work of the Association's Executive Director, and, of course, the Allied Irish Bank whose grant not only funded the Association's own work but also the post of Director of the AIB Joint Education Programme at the University of Liverpool.

BAIS Treasurer's Report and Projection of Expenditure (Financial Year 1989- 90)**Financial Situation (assets) as of 10 Nov 1989**

AIB Deposit Account	£10,181.65
AIB Current Account	£2,438.07
Total	£12,619.72

Financial Expenditure Nov. 1989 - Feb/March 1990

Executive Director Salary: £963.15 per month	£3,852.60
Executive Director Tax and NI: £549.29 per month	£2,197.16
Executive Director Superannuation per year:	£925.20
Executive Director and Office Expenses £250 per month	£1,000.00
Total	£7,975.76
Remainder	£4,645.96

Newsletter Printing £332.93	£332.93
Newsletter Editor's Expenses	£150.00
Irish Studies £144.00	£144.00
Total	£626.93
Remainder	£4,019.03

Officers and Convenors Meetings: £120 x three	£360.00
Full Executive: £400 x two	£800.00
Total	£1,160.00
Remainder	£2,859.03

Institute of Linguists	£500.00
Total	£500.00
Remainder	£2,359.03

Officers' Expenses	£1,400.00
Total	£1,400.00
Remainder	£959.03

BAIS Conference	£500.00
Total	£500.00
Remainder - Contingency	£459.03

Shaun Richards, Hon. Treasurer

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A folder and stationery, bearing the new logo of the Association [see front cover], have now been printed, as has a new 'mission statement', to be used in connection with fundraising. The comments received to date concerning the folder and the logo have been very favourable. The thanks of the Association are due not only to Executive member Oliver McLarnon who supervised the development of the logo and the production of the folder, but also to designer John Carbery, and the printer, Laurence McCann. Seamus Heaney and his publishers, Faber and Faber, gave BAIS free use of the quotation from *The Haw Lantern* which enhanced the folder. Thanks are also due to all those people who gave advice as the 'mission statement' was going through various of its eight stages. It is hoped that the folder and distinctive logo of BAIS will enhance the image of the Association.

A first version of a brochure setting out BAIS running costs, all the 'bids' which have been submitted by institutes of higher education, as well as the costs of the Joint Education Programme, has been completed. The costs of other schemes can be included as projects are developed. The brochure, together with the folder and the mission statement, will be used to support the approaches for private and corporate funding.

As members will be aware, the sponsorship provided in February of 1989 by Allied Irish Bank was designated to support the Executive Director of BAIS and the AIB Director of the Joint Education Programme. On 13 July a reception took place at Liverpool to announce the appointment of Roger Swift as AIB Director of the JEP. This was attended by members of the Executive and by many local members of the Association. Discussions have been going on for some time between the Officers of BAIS and the Director of the Institute of Irish Studies concerning a new structure for the Joint Education Programme. A document outlining this structure was agreed by the Executive at its meeting of the 11th November.

Two articles appearing in widely distributed publications will serve to publicise the work of BAIS. 'Ireland from all the angles' appeared in the Autumn issue of *Banknote*, the customer magazine of AIB; and an in-depth feature on the teaching of Irish to adults in the UK, by Kate Thompson, appeared in the Autumn issue of *Netword News* which is published by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research. The *Irish Post* gives valuable coverage to the activities of the Association, but we need to get greater coverage in the British and Irish press and suggestions from members on this count will be welcomed. By far the greatest feedback the Association has had from any publicity so far arose from a short piece in the Education section of the *Guardian* in 1989.

The biennial Irish Studies Conference of the Association took place at Liverpool between 8-10 September 1989. The attendance was very satisfactory and the conference was

most successful both as an academic and as a social occasion. Thanks must go to the hosts, the staff of the Institute of Irish Studies and all their helpers; to BAIS Conference Secretary Jonathan Moore, and to the local Conference Secretary, Harvey Cox; to the University, to Messrs Guinness and to the Irish Embassy for the 'hospitality' provided; and to Bernard Canavan, who produced such a fine poster.

At the level of higher education, a letter has gone out to all Vice-Chancellors/Principals of Universities/University Colleges and Directors of Polytechnics commending the advantage of Irish Studies under the new system of funding in higher education. In this context, the news that St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, will join the Institute of Irish Studies, Liverpool University, and the Polytechnic of North London, in offering a half degree in Irish Studies, is very welcome. The Adult and Further Education Subcommittee is preparing a survey which will form the basis of a report/strategy within this sector; and Pat Duffy, of the Wolverhampton Irish Cultural Association, has been nominated by the subcommittee as its second representative on the Executive. The Irish Language Subcommittee recently organised a weekend workshop in Coventry for teachers of Irish to adults. The course, which was self-financing, was led by Liam O Cuinneagain, the Language Development Officer of the Gaelic League. In the field of compulsory education, BAIS, working within the Joint Education Programme, intends to organise a number of regional in-service training sessions for teachers in support of the syllabuses developed under the JEP.

Co-operation with other bodies continues. The Irish Language Subcommittee is preparing a bibliography for adult learners of Irish in conjunction with the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research; and Bord Failte Eireann will continue to run its essay competition for undergraduates, 'Images of Ireland', in conjunction with BAIS in 1990. Gael-Linn made an imaginative gesture in providing a number of scholarships for adult learners of Irish to attend language courses in the Irish gaeltacht in 1989. It is hoped to expand that scheme in 1990.

Looking to the future, BAIS is once again supporting financially the Soar Valley Conference on Irish Dimensions in British Education, which will take place on 10th February; and BAIS members will make a substantial contribution to the programmes of the Conference. Plans have also been made to hold the BAIS lectures in Manchester in February-March 1990. The theme is 'Ireland Past and Present' and Janet Wallwork of Manchester and Executive member George Watson are in charge of the arrangements. It is hoped to re-run a series of sixth-form conferences in Northern Ireland in April 1990, on the lines of last year's conferences.

On the basis of the information set out above, I can report that a range of initiatives is being maintained by the Association; that the image of BAIS is being promoted through these initiatives, through the attendant publicity, and through the development of a distinctive logo; and that the structure of the Joint Education Programme has been

streamlined and formalised, and strengthened through the appointment of a full-time Director. A range of approaches for sponsorship are going forward and a number of our patrons are actively assisting in the fundraising process. The Treasurer's Report indicates the 'other side of the coin', as does the inevitable slowness of the fundraising process. In all areas of BAIS development the voluntary efforts and freely-given time of the members continues to be vital to the progress of the Association and the Irish Studies movement.

During the year Allied Irish Bank and the Ireland Funds have expressed their confidence in the BAIS project through financial sponsorship. Both are to be congratulated for their farsightedness in recognising the long-term importance of this project, especially since the Association's objectives - despite their undoubted long-term significance - do not have the same dramatic and immediate appeal as many of the other worthy projects currently seeking public and corporate funding.

Sean Hutton, Executive Director

SUB-COMMITTEE CONVENORS' REPORTS

TERTIARY EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Last July we agreed on a strategy that seemed to combine hope with reality. Since then we have prepared a resume of costings from a number of polytechnic and university institutions as a reference file for appraisal by potential donors. The central problem here is that these vary greatly in estimating methods: some build on existing resources and require only marginal financial input; others are more ambitious and would require considerable input. We might try: (i) to standardise these, i.e. ask institution leaders to inform us about how they arrived at their figures, how much official approval they have; (ii) draw up separate lists: each institution could (1) list the 'marginal help' version; (2) list their more ambitious version. The Institute of Irish Studies could also list (a) large scale costing and; (b) essential running costs. We have completed a draft of a letter which has now been sent to all polytechnics and universities pointing out that the encouragement of Irish Studies would benefit their student recruitment by providing popular courses. We need to approach Mr Jackson and his opposition spokesmen to put them in the picture, but this might best be done when we finalise the precise form of the brochure.

I have begun consideration of possible Erasmus exchange and other arrangements. This usually works as follows: a 'parent' institution sets up contacts with other interested bodies (e.g. Dublin, Paris, London) for staff and student exchange. This would mean that, strictly speaking, the BAIS would not operate the exchange, but guide others as to its method of operation. We need to explore this further.

We need to give Irish Studies a higher profile in terms of student recruitment to fulfil the point made above that Irish Studies are popular and pull in students.

George Boyce, Convenor

ADULT EDUCATION/FE SUB-COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the Adult Education Sub-committee took place last October, with representatives from Birmingham, Liverpool and Wolverhampton travelling to Leicester for the occasion.

The next issue of the *Survey of Irish Studies* will have an expanded scope to cover the provision of adult and further education in Britain. In previous years the Association has tried by a variety of informal methods suited to the decentralised nature of this sphere of education to garner as much material as possible in the hopes of eventually being able to act as a central clearing house for practitioners. The success of those previous efforts was limited although the constitution of the sub-committee is due in part to them. With a sub-committee formed of practitioners in the area it is hoped that in future this sub-committee can emulate the success of the other sub-committees in providing a central source of information for and material help to teachers in Irish Studies in the Adult and Further Education spheres.

The Sub-committee nominated Pat Duffy of Wolverhampton Irish Cultural Association as its second representative on the Executive committee of the Association.

Nessan Danaher, Convenor

IRISH LANGUAGE

In July the 3 recipients of the Gael-Linn Scholarships attended the 'Oideas Gael' course in Glencolmcille, Co Donegal. Breandain O Briain and Delia Walsh were placed in the Ardrang where they performed exceedingly well and Meck Birtill was in the Meanrang where he distinguished himself both by his knowledge of the language and by his singing - in Welsh and in Irish. After two weeks of intensive study and immersion in the language, they returned with a greater degree of fluency and confidence.

In August Kate Thompson and Filimine Dolan spent a fortnight in Carraroe, Connemara where they attended the Dianchursa at Aras Ui Chadhain, (courtesy of Udaras na Gaeltachta). Not only did they enjoy and benefit from the course, but gained constant practice in speaking the language in an area where only Irish is spoken. Inspired by new ideas for teaching Irish, they returned full of enthusiasm and with a lovely 'blas'. While there they met with Padraig O hAolain (Ceannaire Eolais, Udaras na Gaeltachta) and Peadar Mac an Iomaire of the Aras with a view to establishing links with Galway University to get support for the teaching of Irish in Britain. Ideas for

exchanging Newsletters and teachers; arranging courses for teachers at Aras Ui Chadhain etc were proposed. Details are to be worked out between Peadar Mac an Iomaire and Sean Hutton.

The last weekend in September saw the first in-service training course for teachers of Irish in Britain taking place in Coventry. Liam O Cuinneagain (of Oideas Gael/ Conradh na Gaeilge) came from Dublin to give us the benefit of his experience and expertise. An energetic teacher himself, Liam demonstrated various methods and courses available. Teachers from London, the Midlands, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Ipswich came together for what turned out to be a most rewarding and stimulating weekend.

In August also Siobhan Ui Neill attended the course at 'Daonscoil na Mumhan' in Waterford and spoke on Radio na Gaeltachta about the state of the Irish language in Britain.

The Autumn Newsletter published by CILT (*Netword*) contained an article about the teaching of 'An Ghaeilge' entitled 'Focus on Irish'. This was written in collaboration with Sheila O'Shea of CILT and gave information about Irish language teaching in Britain and Northern Ireland.

Preparations are in hand for the Institute of Linguists' Exams in May 1990. Several groups have already shown an interest in these. There are also plans to provide more courses and workshops for teachers.

Kate Thompson, Convenor

CONFERENCE REPORTS

BAIS BIENNIAL CONFERENCE, UNDERSTANDING IRELAND, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL, SEPT. 1989

The Association's Conference this year had a more homely feel than previously because we gathered at Liverpool, traditionally a pivot between Britain and Ireland, and made the more so, academically at least, by the establishment of the Institute of Irish Studies.

The Conference programme provided a range of talks on topics ranging from television to health. John A. Murphy, historian and senator, began the proceedings with a witty talk about the relationship between history and politics in contemporary Ireland. He concentrated particularly on the divergence between history as an academic discipline the continuing public perception of history, and the differing needs satisfied by these two types of history.

On the Saturday morning we began with a consideration of the rough draft of history: journalism. In this session we were lucky to have two very skilled and experienced practitioners as speakers. Robin Wilson, editor of *Fortnight*, and Peter Taylor, producer of *Panorama* and of the recent series *Families at War* provided us with insights into the constraints upon and the need for an investigative and analytical journalism. This message was reinforced by the first speaker in the Culture and Literature section. Bernard Sharratt's talk was an impressive analysis of several aspects of television coverage of Ireland in August 1989. His scrupulous analysis cannot be served properly by a summary, but his comment that one consequence of the Anglo-Irish Agreement was that weather symbols began to appear over the Republic of Ireland on the weather forecast maps should alert us to the pervasive and shifting nature of the contexts of Irish Studies. Shaun Richards furthered this point by arguing forcefully that context must be seen as more than background; contexts are part and parcel of what we study. David Cairns finished the session with a consideration of Lady Morgan's *The Wild Irish Girl*, after which we adjourned for a well-deserved lunch.

Brendan Bradshaw's paper 'Nationalist History in a British Context' showed that the writing of history too has its contexts by tracing the influences on the development of what has come to be called revisionist history. George Boyce also emphasised the need to study the full contexts of history. Where Bradshaw considered those elements of English historiography which had influenced the writing of Irish history, Boyce expanded on the need to consider the totality of relations so as to produce a fully comparative history of both Ireland and the component nations of Britain.

The session on the Irish language brought out a lively clash of positions. James O'Connell argued that the limited part now played by the Irish language in Irish identity should limit its importance in Irish Studies. Sean Hutton, however, reminded us of the need to sustain and cherish cultural diversity rather than allowing a crude cultural Darwinism to determine the important elements of Irish Studies.

Following a reception sponsored by Guinness and the Irish Embassy, the Conference Dinner allowed us the opportunity to chew over the issues raised thus far, and the equally essential opportunity to unwind. The after dinner speaker, George Watson, faced with the daunting task of following Jim O'Hara's introduction, presented himself to us as an embodiment of the various traditions which converge in the British Association for Irish Studies; we may yet adopt him as the Association mascot.

Sunday morning began with Roger Swift's salutary reminder that a consideration of the Irish in Britain should look beyond the so far predominantly metropolitan-based research if a true picture is to emerge. John Herson's paper on the Irish in Stafford gave insights into the way that the Irish may disappear more easily in small towns than in large ones because of the more limited chances to establish an institutional presence. Ullrich Kockel's paper on projects underway in Dublin and Cork once again

showed that only a broad perspective could accommodate a full study of the Irish in Britain by allowing a comparison between the Irish in Britain and the patterns of life and work in Ireland. The final session, again devoted to the Irish in Britain, focussed on the contemporary scene. Mary Hickman set out the differences between the assimilationist and incorporatist models used to account for the retention of distinct identities among immigrant communities before going on to look at the way in which the Catholic church in Britain has related to the Irish community. Bronwen Walter began her talk by commenting that women are neglected in Irish Studies. In what would have been a revelation to many she pointed out that the majority of Irish emigrants have been women, and that in London Irish women outnumber Irish men. Her paper concentrated on the fact that the occupational profile of Irish women has not matched their educational profile, although this changes within a generation of settling in Britain. Maggie Pearson brought the academic part of the proceedings to a halt with her paper on the health of the Irish in Britain. This was very much a preliminary report as the study of Irish health in Liverpool will be the first of its kind. The official statistics on health offer a cheerless picture in that the premature mortality rates for Irish born men and women are very high, and the hospitalisation rate of Irish people for psychiatric disorders is twice the average. However, as Maggie Pearson pointed out the absence of a previous study means that there are issues of medical labelling which need to be unpacked before we can get to the true picture underlying the official statistics.

After the close of the academic part of the Conference the Association held its Annual General Meeting in the afternoon. Members will already have received notification of the business transacted at the AGM, and I shall here repeat only the meeting's vote of thanks to the conference organisers, to the staff of the Institute of Irish Studies, and to the staff of the Derby-Rathbone Halls, all of whom made our weekend pleasurable in one way or another.

Eamonn Hughes

IASAIL CONFERENCE DEBRECEN, HUNGARY, JULY 10-13 1989

For the first time IASAIL went outside Western Europe for its annual conference. The theme this year was 'Irish Letters - A Small Nation's Contribution to the World'. With participants from as far away as Thailand, India and Brazil, the statement is justified. Papers delivered in the extreme heat ranged from Anglo- Irish Dialects, through the obligatory sessions on Joyce and Yeats, to a paper on an early nineteenth century play by a United Irishman exiled in the United States, set in Hungary.

The 'fantastic' was discussed by several speakers. Maybe this was a tribute to two of the hosts, Donald Morse and Csilla Bertha, who both spoke on this particular motif in the works of different writers. There were also papers on writers who are now enjoying renewed interest; the lesbian element in Kate O'Brien's fiction and two papers on Sean O'Faolain's fiction were among these.

A Canadian influence was also present as delegates were invited to see a radio play, *Ireland's Eye*, by Canadian playwright Michael Cook, performed by students and staff of the housing department. It must be admitted that not many of the delegates at the conference had heard of Mr Cook before this occasion.

Apart from the academic proceedings, the participants enjoyed a fair share of Hungarian hospitality in several ways; gulasch, Bikaver wine, folk dancing, gypsy music, and a memorable excursion to the Puszta, the Plain, where horse and cart were the means of transport.

The only negative aspect of the conference was that some prominent speakers failed to turn up, some without even giving any reason why.

Marie Arndt

SPECIAL REPORTS

SOCIOLOGY AND IRISH STUDIES: SOME CAUSES FOR CONCERN

The Second Survey of Irish Studies in Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Cairns, 1988) is an encouraging documentation of Higher Education developments. However as the author has been at pains to emphasise, it cannot be taken as the definitive picture of the Irish Studies movement. It is only a reflection of those who replied to the British Association for Irish Studies questionnaire. This having been said, it does illustrate how the BAIS is giving support to the work of academics who are at last rendering visible to British students the lives of the peoples of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the Irish community in Great Britain. Given that the graduates of this expanding movement are likely to continue the Irish Studies developments in the school system, then this evidence of extensive research and teaching in Higher Education is consistent with the aspirations of those who helped launch the BAIS in 1985. Closer examination of the 1988 survey does, however, give some grounds for concern.

The Survey contains 342 entries. Not all entries relate to Higher Education, nor are some of the contributions classifiable into subject areas, either by research or teaching. There are, for instance, a number of freelance writers who register their interest in the Irish Studies movement. However, if we group the entries according to subjects involving academics who are carrying out research and/or teaching with an Irish Studies focus in centres of Higher Education, it becomes apparent that there are three leading discipline areas:-

(a) Drama, Language and Literature

(b) History

and (c) Social Sciences

Together these form 79% of both the teaching and research entries which can be classified as work developing in Higher Education. What is worrying is that when we narrow our focus to examine Social Science entries we find that this area produces 64 research entries, the corresponding figure for courses taught is a mere 36 entries. This is also a significantly different pattern to the relationship of research to teaching indexed by the entries for the Literature and History discipline areas (Table 1).

Discipline areas	Teaching	Research
Drama, language and literature	74	90
History	68	79
Social sciences*	36	65
Other subjects	47	62
TOTAL ENTRIES	225	296

Table 1 Classification and distribution of teaching and research

* Includes Economics, Law, Politics, Social Administration and Policy, Social Anthropology, and Sociology. Does not include Geography, Town Planning, Education, American Studies or other inter-disciplinary courses.

There will be some who contest the exclusion of Geography from the Social Science statistic. Its inclusion would certainly boost the Social Sciences teaching profile to a more respectable 52 entries. Yet that still leaves the figure well short of the areas of History and Literature. Nor does the argument about what counts as a social science alter what must be our main concern. For when we come to examine more closely the disciplines constituting the Social Sciences' profile, the evidence suggests that Sociology has an unimpressive record in the development of Irish Studies degree programmes. Out of the 36 entries for teaching in the Social Sciences, only 14 are evidently Sociology courses, or Social Administration/Law courses taught by sociologists.

In contrast, in the last fifteen years the subject has figured prominently in the development of media studies. Amongst the principal concerns of this work has been a critique of the failings of journalism in the reporting of contemporary social issues, such as industrial disputes, racism, sexism, and the conflict in Northern Ireland. This would seem to be a paradox which needs explanation. Consequently, it is instructive to use

some of the subject's theoretical priorities in the criticism of journalism to consider what might be the cause of such course contradictions. We might, for instance, question whether this 'sin of omission' is caused by self-censorship of course programmes by sociologists, or by the social control of University and public sector administrations. An equally disturbing possibility is that the sociologists share, in common with lay personnel, the tendency to marginalise issues related to Ireland and Irish communities.

The issue becomes even more serious when we examine more closely the 14 entries. Of the 8 entries which list University courses in sociology, only 3 of these are in English Universities, in the North East and South West, arguably furthest away from the urban centres in which Irish communities have experienced most harassment, i.e. Birmingham, Liverpool, London and Manchester. (Table 2)

UNIVERSITIES

University of Ulster at Coleraine

Queen's University, Belfast (2 entries)

University of Wales, Swansea (2 entries)

University of Bristol

University of Exeter

University of Durham

THE PUBLIC SECTOR

St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, London (2 entries)

North London Polytechnic (2 entries)

Edge Hill College of Higher Education, Ormskirk, Lancs

North Staffordshire Polytechnic

Table 2 Sociology courses in higher education focussing exclusively on Ireland and issues relating to Irish communities

There is then a case to be answered by sociologists. The subject has been accused of being parasitic on the suffering of the oppressed and in the last twenty years it has been concerned to respond to this criticism by developing courses which provide critiques of the record of the British State in contributing to the oppression of the working class, minority groups and women. The analysis of power and the state figures prominently in most Sociology Department degree programmes, with courses addressing industrial conflict, struggles in the Welfare State, gender and race now commonplace. But where are the courses critically examining the relationship between Britain and Ireland, and the issues facing Irish communities at home and abroad? The literature to mount such courses is clearly there to be examined, as is evident from even a cursory glance at the bibliographies compiled by Bill Rolston and colleagues in Belfast

and John Darby at Coleraine, both of which specifically address the writing and research relating to Northern Ireland. There is also an important body of work which would help in the task of understanding the Southern Irish State, most notably collected in a series of volumes published by the Sociological Association of Ireland. Yet it seems that sociologists, perhaps like the Irish community in Britain, have felt constrained to remain silent.

This curious example of the conservative nature of the sociological profession flies in the face of the public reputation of the subject as the seedbed of criticism and rebellion. How does the discipline respond to a challenging book like *Only the Rivers Run Free: Northern Ireland, the Women's War?* Or respond to the pages of the *Irish Post* on the new wave of emigration from Ireland? Or address the questions concerning miscarriages of justice, so agonisingly illustrated by the release of the Guildford Four? Such controversies make clear that there is an urgent task for sociologists to address. These points also suggest the need for the kind of critical self-examination called for in *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* by the late Alvin Gouldner, whose spirited efforts in the face of established sociological orthodoxy in the United States, helped set in motion so many of the most vigorous developments in British sociology. While sociologists criticise the role of journalists in decontextualising events in Northern Ireland, there seems little evidence that most members of the profession have been able, or willing, to provide the necessary social, political, and historical context in their own sphere of direct communication, namely undergraduate and postgraduate courses in higher education.

The Second Survey is now some two years out of date. David Cairns is in the throes of producing a much wider documentation of higher education developments. It is possible that the foregoing charges may have to be withdrawn, and that sociologists are beginning to open up debates on Ireland and Irish communities in their degree programmes. Certainly, Edge Hill College of Higher Education, Ormskirk, Lancashire has moved on since 1988, with currently two sociology option courses in the BA Applied Social Sciences Degree scheme validated by the University of Lancaster, devoted exclusively to Irish Studies. In the Postgraduate Programme, the part-time MA course in Crime, Deviance and Social Policy now has two option courses which contain significant elements addressing the controversies around 'Law and the State' and 'Anti-Irish Racism'. The number of students participating in these programmes are as follows:

Undergraduates following the full Irish Studies option programme:	28
Undergraduates following a common core degree course with a significant element of work on Ireland:	72
Postgraduates following option courses with specific units of work on Irish social issues:	25

Looking to the future, in the 1990/1991 academic year all first year social sciences students will take a Foundation course which involves studying the 'Political, Economic and Social Development of Britain and Ireland'. In effect, this will establish the first continuous Irish Studies stream in a Social Sciences degree programme in British higher

education. Yet the question remains: why has British sociology so steadfastly refused to address the issues of politics and policy which have dominated the media for over twenty years, and oppressed Irish people for centuries? The sociology of race and racism, the Black experience, must now take account of the analysis of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Likewise, so must the Irish experience be located. Otherwise, academic myopia or professional timidity is a charge which British sociologists will surely find hard to refute.

Footnotes

Darby J, et al. *A Register of Economic and Social Research on Northern Ireland*, Social Science Research Council, Cambridge, Chadwick-Healey, 1983.
 Darby J (ed.) *Northern Ireland: the Background to the Conflict*, Belfast, Appletree Press, 1983. Contains a 24 page bibliography.
 Rolston B, et al. *A Social Science Bibliography of Northern Ireland, 1945-1983*, Northern Ireland, Print Workshop, 1983. The most comprehensive work published to date, with several thousand entries.

Alan Morton, Edge Hill College of Higher Education

IMAGES OF IRELAND: BORD FAILTE/BAIS ESSAY COMPETITION

In October 1989 Bord Failte announced the winner of the 'Images of Ireland' essay competition for undergraduates at third level institutions throughout Britain. Essays of between 5,000 and 6,000 words on any aspect of Ireland qualified for adjudication for the prize of a seventeen day scholarship at the International Summer School at University College, Dublin, in July 1990.

The winning entry was submitted by John Ballance of Brighton Polytechnic, who is a third year student of Humanities. His essay, a study of 'The Role of Religion in the Northern Ireland Conflict', was judged the unanimous winner and received the highest praise for style, structure and quality of research. Mr Ballance's prize at the University College Dublin International Summer School in 1990 includes all tuition fees, accommodation and travelling expenses for the 17 day scholarship. This prize is sponsored by the Irish Tourist Board. The Summer School's theme for 1990 is 'Ireland - History, Politics and Literary Tradition' presenting a broad survey of Irish history and heritage, of tradition and contemporary culture through lectures, seminars, field tours, theatre visits, recitals and social activities.

The essay competition was organised by Bord Failte/The Irish Tourist Board in association with the British Association for Irish Studies and the Leicester Irish Society. Its aim was to provide a worthwhile incentive for students to further their awareness of Ireland and the Irish, to introduce more students to Irish Studies and to encourage more young people to visit Ireland.

The panel of judges for the competition was chaired by Mike Burns, London Editor of RTE, and comprised Nesson Danaher, Soar Valley Community College, Leicester; the

poet Catherine Byron; Eamonn Hughes, British Association for Irish Studies; and Jim O'Dwyer of Leicester Irish Society.

After the success of last year's competition it has been decided to run a competition annually with a scholarship to UCD Summer School as the major prize. As in 1989 application details for the competition will be sent to all third level institutions throughout Britain early in 1990.

Commenting at the prize giving, Margaret Cahill, General Manager - Britain, Irish Tourist Board, said "The 'Images of Ireland' essay competition was a great success in bringing to the attention of students the importance of Irish Studies. It also generated great interest among young people in the opportunities available in summer studies and holiday opportunities in Ireland. I am delighted that this good work will continue in 1990."

Further information about this year's competition can be obtained from Margaret Mellor, Irish Tourist Board, 01-493 3201.

Margaret Mellor, Irish Tourist Board

IRISH LANGUAGE (AN CHAEILGE) - STANDARDISATION OF TEACHING METHODS AND COURSES FOR BEGINNERS AND INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

Conradh na Gaeilge (The Gaelic League) in Ireland has recently begun to standardise the teaching methods and courses used in its classes throughout the country. This development is now seen to be essential due to the great demand for beginners' and intermediate classes in all the League's centres. Such a development is essential not only in Ireland, but also in Great Britain and other places where a similar growth is occurring in Irish language teaching.

It takes many adults quite a long period of consideration before they actually make the decision to learn Irish. When they begin to participate in classes it is imperative that the classes themselves are conducted efficiently in order that these learners may be brought to a reasonable level of proficiency before they become impatient with their lack of progress and cease attending.

Teachers involved with classes for adult learners must be aware of the strategies that will ensure success, and should aim to use successful teaching methods and interesting and effective courses. Consideration should also be given to the most suitable grouping of learners. They should, where possible, be grouped as beginners, advanced beginners, and intermediate learners.

Particular attention must be paid to methods used in teaching total beginners and beginners with a basic knowledge of the Irish language. The teaching methods now

used by Conradh na Gaeilge, and by Oideas Gael in Donegal, are based on the use of a course with a limited vocabulary, simple pronunciation lessons, and communicative lesson skills. The teachers use phrase drilling techniques with question and answer sessions, involving the class and teacher in rapid sequence. Overhead projectors and tapes are used and there is little emphasis on writing or reading in the early stages. It is important that the maximum possible time be allocated to sessions in the early stages. The text used in Conradh na Gaeilge/Oideas Gael classes at the moment is the Bord na Gaeilge/Caeleagras course, *Bunchursa Gaeilge* (Baile atha Cliath, Bord na Gaeilge, 1980), which is useful for developing the core of language needed at the outset. The second level (advanced beginners) follows a similar routine, but with more extensive use of simple texts and the creation of communicative sessions (simple, short conversations about everyday matters).

The intermediate class should aim to cater for those whose level of comprehension is high, in terms of both vocabulary and language structure, but who have not yet broken through the speech barrier. Teachers must be creative in providing exciting and interesting class materials. We recommend the use of extracts from radio broadcasts, songs, articles, poetry and short stories, in conjunction with a chosen course to be used for 30% of the class time. Conradh na Gaeilge/Oideas Gael classes use *Beart is Briathar 1* (Baile atha Cliath, An Clo Ceilteach, 1989) at the moment. This course has tapes with news items, extracts from radio programmes etc, which are useful as the main course aid.

Standard pronunciation and grammar are the norm in all the classes referred to above. This eliminates problems for learners who change teachers, venues, etc.

Teachers must always give thought to the structuring of sessions so that efficient use is made of time available and so that lessons sustain the interest of the learners.

The use of proper teaching methods and of a properly researched and structured course will ensure that potential learners are working within a positive framework, enabling them to make that progress which will encourage them to persevere in their study of the Irish language.

Liam O Cuinneagain, Director of Language Courses, Conradh na Gaeilge

[Liam O Cuinneagain was the course leader at the workshop for Irish language teachers organised by BAIS at Coventry on September 30 - 1 October 1989.]

CELTIC EDUCATION IN LONDON

On May 17 1989 a meeting of Celtic educationalists in London established the London Association for Celtic Education (LACE). The aim of the Association is to fight to maintain current Celtic educational facilities in the UK capital and to seek to expand them.

The establishment of LACE was felt necessary due to education budget cutbacks by central and local government and the imminent demise of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) in April 1990. A bleak outlook for the teaching of the Celtic languages, cultural studies, history and music will result from the cuts. Already many of the Celtic languages evening classes are feeling the new constrictions. Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain (The Welsh School, London), the only Welsh-language medium school in the UK capital, is having difficulties obtaining grant aid.

A meeting of educationalists representing all six Celtic cultures (the Irish, Scots, Welsh, Manx, Bretons and Cornish), and covering the entire spectrum of education from playschool groups to higher education, was called on the initiative of the London branch of the Celtic League. The meeting felt that a London Association for Celtic Education should be immediately established to act as an entirely independent body from the League. Indeed, this way forward had already been proposed by the London Branch of the League which saw its role only as the catalyst to establish the project.

LACE was launched officially at an all-day conference on the state of Celtic education in London which was held on Saturday November 4 at the University of London Union.

LACE is designed solely for ensuring adequate facilities and funding for teachers and students, throughout the entire spectrum of Celtic education, and promoting those facilities to those wishing to learn a Celtic language, study Celtic literatures, histories, musics or any other aspect of Celtic cultures. It hopes to publish an annual directory of those facilities and intends to pursue alternative funding as a means to maintain and expand facilities.

Membership of LACE is £5 (waged) and £3 (unwaged). All organisations which are interested and support the aims and objectives of LACE are invited to make enquiries about affiliation.

LACE would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in the Association; the address is Marian Geoghegan, Secretary LACE, c/o The Irish in Islington Project, Eastgate Building, 131 St John's Way, London N19 3RG.

Marian Geoghegan

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARIES IRISH STUDIES GROUP

Early in 1988 a group of librarians representing a cross section of libraries in Birmingham met to explore the relative absence of an Irish dimension in library provision in the city.

The Irish form the largest ethnic minority in Birmingham, accounting for at least 7% of the population. This is fairly evenly spread across the city but rises to 10-11% in

the Sparkbrook constituency and Erdington ward. If the large number of people who identify with their Irish descent is added to this figure, the percentage is even higher.

Yet for such a sizeable minority the Irish have had a low profile in terms of service provision and delivery in local government and Birmingham has lagged behind other cities with large Irish populations. The reasons for this are many and varied, but undoubtedly the pub bombings of 1974 have contributed to political caution being exercised both within the Irish community and by the service providers.

When we first met as the Irish Studies Group there were already signs that awareness of the Irish dimension was on the increase in the city, particularly in the field of education. It seemed timely for Birmingham Libraries to mount an initiative and be in at the forefront of this emerging awareness.

At the outset the group had as its aims:

1. To promote awareness of the existence and needs of the Irish community in Birmingham.
2. To actively acquire relevant bookstock including material in the Irish language.
3. To develop contacts with a diverse range of community groups representing and serving the Irish population in the city.
4. To produce an exhibition about the Irish community in Birmingham to tie in with the city's centenary celebrations in 1989 and to act as a focus for the Irish Studies initiative.

Researching the exhibition gave us a way in to the Irish community; we began by contacting the Irish Welfare and Information Centre, and the enthusiastic Birmingham correspondent for the *Irish Post*. This uncovered a closely linked network of vibrant social and cultural activity encompassing music, dancing, sport, Irish language classes, parish centres and women's groups. As we gained the trust and respect of key figures in the Irish community we scoured our own Local Studies Department and official sources for background materials and pictures. We soon realised to our surprise (and horror!) that there was a complete dearth of any written material on the Irish in Birmingham and only a handful of photographs. The subject had been uncharted and virtually ignored.

Fortunately, a Ph.D. student was able to help us out with some background material. The rest was up to us - original research at a grassroots level demanding a huge commitment in terms of time, unsocial hours (most groups meet in the evening) and motivation, as we endlessly followed up unanswered letters and desperately tried to hunt down photographs. To our original aims we added a fifth: to gather together as much contemporary and historical material as possible to ensure recognition of the Irish contribution to the life of the city.

Several months into the exhibition project and still lacking the good quality visual material necessary to mount a successful display, we approached Building Sights Community Education through Photography Project funded by West Midlands Arts and the City Council. Our proposal was for funding that would enable us to continue researching and eventually writing the text of the exhibition, whilst Building Sights took on the design and production and some contemporary location photography. The proposal was accepted and for the next eight months we worked in collaboration to produce 'A Rough Oul' Crossing: Shades of the Irish Experience in Birmingham'. On 21 April 1989 the exhibition was launched at Acocks Green Library attracting publicity from the Birmingham press, the *Irish Post* and local radio. The event was a true celebration incorporating a lively programme of Irish music and dancing. Of the 200 people present the majority had contributed to the exhibition.

From a library point of view, one of the most fulfilling aspects of the launch was the interest shown in the 200 or so books and other library resources. This was a selection of the material of Irish interest bought over the previous year, much of it from London and Manchester bookshops. This material has formed the basis of the three stock revisions organised to date by the Irish Studies Group covering fiction, non-fiction, and women's issues. There is now a much larger and wider range of material available throughout the city and this will back up the exhibition as it tours other libraries.

Whilst the exhibition ended up on a much larger scale than originally envisaged, it showed us in a unique way the diversity of the Irish community in Birmingham. It also explored the main issues which run as themes through the exhibition - the intense cultural pride and political guardedness of the Irish community, the level of negative stereotyping and prejudice, and the crisis of identity - do individuals disguise their Irishness or declare it? Also in evidence is a resurgence of cultural identity amongst second-generation Irish reflected not only in such areas as dancing and music but also in the growing popularity and status of the Irish language and Irish Studies in general.

The timely creation of the Irish Studies Group and the respect and trust generated by the exhibition project has meant that the Libraries Department is seen as a key component in the general coalescence of initiatives in the field of Irish Studies in Birmingham. The Group is represented on the steering committee of a Bournville FE College project to set up Irish language classes initially but eventually broadening into more general Irish Studies classes. It is also providing booklists and publicity for a new AS level course in Irish Studies being run at St Philip's Sixth Form College. 'A Rough Oul' Crossing' has been displayed at both of these colleges and formed part of the Irish community's own Birmingham centenary celebrations in September. The wealth of the research material generated by the exhibition has prompted Conradh na Gaeilge (The Gaelic League) to put in an application to Ireland Funds to enable this to be published as a book. This application has been actively supported by the

Irish Studies Group. We have also been asked to run a workshop at the Seventh Annual Irish Studies Conference at Soar Valley, Leicester in 1990.

As events continue to take place within libraries, there is also a far greater awareness of the Irish dimension within our own department and amongst elected members. The councillor who launched the exhibition voluntarily attended a Community Lunch at Sparkhill Library on the theme of Irish Studies in Birmingham (this attracted no fewer than 30 organisations and resulted in a commitment by Birmingham Public Libraries to produce a directory of the Irish in Birmingham). This same councillor personally presented a report to committee on the exhibition, generating a request for the Irish evening to be repeated at Erdington Library in July 1989. Other libraries are now planning their own initiatives and the Irish Studies Group is looking for new ideas for events to highlight the exhibition at different venues as well as at the production and publication of booklists.

Eighteen months on we can certainly claim that there is an Irish dimension to library provision in Birmingham. Equally important is that libraries are regarded with trust and respect by voluntary bodies within the Irish community and by other service providers and are playing a key part in the development of strategies and resources to celebrate the Irish identity in the city.

For more information on the activities of the Irish Studies Group contact 021- 440 3123.

Felicity Rock and Martin Flynn, Birmingham Public Libraries

BOOKS

REVIEWS

Adrian Guelke: *Northern Ireland: The International Perspective*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1988, hb, £27.50

The recent arrest in Paris of three loyalist paramilitary members should have confirmed the increasingly international dimension of the conflict in Northern Ireland. The incident surrounded a plot instigated by 'Ulster Resistance' and involving a South African arms diplomat and a Swiss-based American arms dealer. The deal was to exchange missile secrets from Shorts in Belfast, for arms from South Africa. There were even wider international implications. French intelligence was deeply involved, having 'tracked' the loyalists for several weeks, while the incident seems seriously to damage the relations between Pretoria and President Mitterand's socialist government.

It is this internationalisation of the Northern Ireland problem which is the focus of Guelke's attention. Members of Ulster Resistance (or any loyalist) will find little comfort

in the book. It confirms the isolation of Unionists and the lack of sympathy for their cause. The vast majority of world opinion favours a united Ireland. This is not simply because of emotional support for the Irish nationalist cause. Rather, it is because the status of Northern Ireland, as a conditional part of the United Kingdom, is seen as an anomaly in the international context. Increasingly, the international norm is to recognise the world as divided into territorially based, permanent states.

Guelke outlines four dominant perspectives concerning the status of Northern Ireland. Firstly, there are those integrationists who recognise Northern Ireland as a legal and integral part of the United Kingdom. The British government has used this position to prevent formal internationalisation of the conflict (i.e. it is an internal problem of the UK state). Secondly, there are those on the right, most notably Enoch Powell, who fail to differentiate between the British Isles as a geographical entity and a political one. Their strategic case is that Ireland is an offshore island, control of which by a hostile power would pose a great threat to British security. The third grouping are those who believe that Northern Ireland can achieve its most legitimate form as an independent state. There are two major forms. Those loyalists who see it as a 'fall back' position should the British government ever declare its intent to withdraw. Calls for this form of unilateral independence have usually surfaced at times of extreme tension between Unionists and the British government. For example, such demands were made by Vanguard in the early 1970s, and re-surfaced in the wake of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. However, it is the notion of a negotiated independence, which has been promoted by the UDA, which is seen as a positive solution to Northern Ireland's anomalous status. The major weaknesses of this perspective are obvious. It has enjoyed little electoral support both because of fears concerning the economic consequences and the understandable fears of the minority community.

Finally there are the views of the Irish nationalists. It is this perspective which has had the biggest influence on world opinion. Its main tenets are simply stated. Northern Ireland is an artificially created state, whose inclusion within the UK represents a block to the self-determination of the majority of the people on the island. The enforcement of Direct Rule and the presence of British troops has strengthened the claims of the nationalists internationally.

It is the consensus of world opinion in favour of a united Ireland and Northern Ireland's lack of international legitimacy which are central to Guelke's analysis. The overall impact of the internationalisation of the conflict 'has been to reinforce the fundamental role that the threat to Northern Ireland's existence as a political entity plays in entrenching the province's divisions'. It is this question of the legitimacy of the state, and in particular how it relates to the legitimisation of violence which Guelke uses to discuss the roles of the major actors, both internal and external, in the conflict in Northern Ireland.

None of the major international power groupings emerges with much credit. Britain's policies have been dominated by 'crisis management' and the overriding desire that 'the conflict does not spread to the rest of the body politic' (p. 82). The continuing ambiguity of attitudes in the Republic towards the North have been accommodated rather than clarified by the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Here too, the overwhelming desire is that the politics of the North are not allowed to split Southern society. European involvement has taken place almost entirely at the level of formal institutions. No European government has been prepared to damage bilateral relations with Britain by pursuing the dominant European rhetoric concerning unification through constitutional nationalism.

By contrast in the country most involved internationally with the conflict, the United States, Northern Ireland occupies a low position on the official political agenda. That does not mean that all parties in Northern Ireland have not increasingly sought to influence American opinion. In the early 1980s some 20% identified themselves as 'Irish'. By far the majority of opinion has been mobilised in support of a united Ireland. One of the major organisations established has been NORAI, which from the beginning closely identified itself with the Provisionals. Guelke outlines the organisation's activities, from simple fund raising to the tailoring of Sinn Féin literature to suit the social conservative and anti-communist American audience. Unionists too have courted the American audience, without much success. By and large the Scots-Irish connection in America with its origins in the 18th and 19th century emigration has remained remote from the current phase of the conflict. The Irish American lobby has remained virtually unchallenged in the US.

Guelke is understandably reticent to debate the future of the Northern Irish state. Those predictions he does make however are gloomy. He sees no reason to believe that the conflict will not continue into the next century. Nor is he convinced that any of the solutions currently on the agenda would in fact legitimise Northern Ireland's place in the world. The 'British' solution of a devolved power sharing administration would still leave Northern Ireland in limbo. Other 'solutions' such as independence, Irish unity, or integration face huge obstacles to their realisation. The first two are clearly not desired by large numbers of people within Northern Ireland, while the latter is unlikely to be welcomed by the British population. Those currently active in the 'Time To Go' campaign will hardly be heartened by his conclusion that 'there is little basis in Loyalist ideology or history for the supposition that Protestant resistance would dissolve if Britain withdrew its support for the union' (p. 205).

Guelke's conclusions are in line with several who have gone before him, that there is no internal solution to the Northern Irish conflict. The crisis has been made more intractable because of the legitimisation of violence by external agents. There may however be some glimmer of hope in Guelke's work. The very process of internationalisation he discusses may well have had a malign role to play regarding

Northern Ireland. It may not always be so. Mrs Thatcher may be hostile to what she calls a 'socialist super-state', but if the single market successfully changes the political frame of reference, internationalisation may yet offer some hope for a solution.

James McAuley, St Mary's College

Michael Kenneally (ed.): *Cultural Contexts and Literary Idioms in Contemporary Literature*, Colin Smythe, Gerards Cross, 1988, hb, £25, 0-86140 230 8

The informing intention of this collection, the first in a four-volume series in which the next three publications will focus on poetry, drama and fiction, is to be applauded and several of the articles contributed to this 'contextualising' text do, indeed, provide the reader with informing insights into the 'cultural contexts' announced in the title; contexts which, as expanded in the dust-jacket blurb, are to be cultural, social and political. Fintan O'Toole's opening essay extends the cultural critique of the modern Republic which he has already essayed in, for example, *The Crane Bag*, to acknowledge that in Ireland there is a sense of a new beginning, 'a demand that things be seen anew'. After this one cultural essay, however, - one which addresses emigration, economics, and the cultural impact of sex, drugs and rock and roll on the old pieties of religion, nationalism and the land - essays are variable in the extent to which they venture beyond a very traditional literary focus. In part the collection allows for this in that one stated intention is to establish the characteristics and concerns of particular genres, but this also permits the inclusion of essays which, in their tightly focussed concerns, would not be out of place in the projected genre-specific collections.

The novel, for example, is represented by two essays, one on the 'Big House' theme, the other on consciousness and identity in the work of four women novelists. The latter, in a particular, is a highly text-oriented piece and while the final paragraph of the 'Big House' essay does allude to the cultural-political moment, neither of these contributions could be said to provide an adequate critical context for an understanding of the contemporary Irish novel nor, given their traditional, textualist concerns, establish a methodology on which a further genre-specific volume could draw. While the essays dealing with the other genres are frequently interesting - 'Ireland's *Antigones*' by Anthony Roche, for example, is both perceptive and sensitive to the wider cultural implications of his topic - drama, like the novel is represented by essays which do not attempt to address anything like the structural and thematic underpinning of that particular literary idiom as produced within, and informed by, a contemporary Irish context.

There are admittedly some brief but provocative pieces about Irish poetic clichés and Anglo-Irish literary relations, along with an idiosyncratic 'West Coast' meditation on mythology and transcendence, and an article on Irish women poets which jogs contentedly through an explication of content. Too often, however, the same writers and texts do service as examples across a wide number of articles and this contributes to an overall sense that of this volume as yet another collection of essays on Irish writers about

whom there appears nothing particularly interesting left to say. What is frustrating about the collection is that the promised cultural, social and political contexts are frequently lacking - it is this which, perhaps, could have made it into the volume it promised to be.

Shaun Richards, North Staffs Poly

Daithi O hOgain: *Fionn mac Cumhaill: Images of the Gaelic Hero*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1988, hb, £30.00, 0-7171-1532-1

O hOgain's bibliography is yet another indicator of the enviable continuity of Celtic studies. The great nineteenth century editions (e.g. Stokes, Campbell, Meyer) are still in use, issues of *Rev. Celt.* and *Zschr. f. celt. Ph.* as old as the century are evidently still worth consulting. The editorial and interpretative efforts in 'Fionn' studies of MacNeill O'Rahilly, Murphy *et al.* continue to provide the basis for any further progress. Beyond that, Celtic studies seem to invite the scholar to participate in the tradition he is surveying. O hOgain himself moves along lines first established by medieval predecessors. Having faced 'the bricolage of medieval Fionn lore' he describes how he had 'worked backwards through different layers of superimposed material in search of the basic Fionn'. It is remarkable how before him compilers, glossators, story-tellers, puzzling over a piecemeal tradition with its episodic inconsistencies and etymologically obscure epithets, with its profusion of doubles and haphazardly imported items from other cycles, had likewise been engaged in 'a continual return to the source imagery'. They too 'tried to make sense of what had come down to them'. Lacking modern scholarly tools they frequently failed to do so.

O hOgain can bring to bear on his reading of texts his familiarity with Celtic mythology and philology, European literature and international folklore. From the beginning of the literary tradition obscurities were inevitable as the historicised Fionn had assimilated qualities of the related wisdom-deity Lugh (who lived on in folklore). Over the centuries the tales associated with him had reflected in turn the dynastic feuds of the Leinster chieftains, the province's rivalry with Connacht, the Munster perspective of clerics. As a result, Fionn and his men ran over the length and breadth of Ireland, often to the reader's confusion. His *Maennerbund* of roving young warriors/reevers became in story the country's sole *fianna* (O. Ir. *fian*, hunting, fighting, gaining). The late medieval figure opposes foreign invaders, is a champion hurler, lives in the forest. When he sucks his thumb he receives enlightenment. His hair is white. Behind each of these lurks the archaic forebear who overcame Otherworld beings, whose prowess as a divine child lay in aquatic feats in the Boyne from whose depths he brought up treasure. Once his exertions were such that he emerged turned into an old man. A lady in a *si*-mound revives him but his hair remained silver (i.e. diving/drinking = the seer's potion and death-like trance; bringing up treasure/the *si*-woman's help = the warrior king's exploits).

The texts reflect the hero's many skills: he is versed in history, topography, prophetic wisdom. O hOgain provides a compressed survey of the earlier material. He is happier with comparatively coherent narratives like *The Boyhood Deeds* and fills out obvious gaps with material gleaned from other compilations or ballad-collections. Like himself, many compilers were poets who would have agreed with him that 'the main impetus of the Fianna lore has always been the drama of its narrative'. He remarks how their 'hunger for new motifs is demonstrated by the rather facile and loose adaptations of floating narrative motifs'. The antiquarian's disapproval is more than off-set by the writer's admiration for the adept way later redactors of the tradition synchronised material coming from diverse sources, from folklore, from the classics, from French and English *romans d'aventure*, even from the Arabian Nights. The novel length stories of eighteenth century writers represent the 'Fianna cycle at its best' (e.g. Coimin's innovative lay involving Oisín and Niamh's tryst in *Tír na nóg*, written about 1750). Concise and readable summaries are provided.

After fruition came the rapid decline in Ireland; allegorisation excludes character delineation, flippancy and buffoonery obscure genuine humour, the stress is solely on action. Scottish contributions remained richly varied for much longer. Though the mythological perspective is virtually ignored, the many details reflect the social values of the peasant story-teller. O hOgain is in sympathy with Anglo-Irish freewheeling adaptations of the tradition. He quotes Eavan Boland: 'Listen. This is the noise of myth . . . The shifts and fluencies are infinite'.

Rolf H. Lass, University of Warwick

Bruce S. Elliott: *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach*, McGill-Queens University Press, Kingston and Montreal, and the Institute of Irish Studies, Belfast, 1988, pb, £16.50, 0-85389-297-0. Kerby A. Miller: *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*, Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford, 1985, pb, £8.95, 0-19-505187-4.

Both these massive scholarly tomes are to be recommended to those interested in the Irish diaspora. Each clearly illustrates the strides with which the study of immigration in general and the Irish in particular has developed in North America, and yet at the same time each demonstrates the importance of work on both sides of the Atlantic, whether in Britain and Ireland or in the USA and Canada. There are echoes here of W.G. Hoskins, David Doyle, and Stephen Therstrom, and yet each author has clearly left a very personal stamp upon their work. Though the experience of the Irish in the Americas is still widely associated with that of the mainly Roman Catholic immigrants within the United States, Elliott's work on the mainly Protestant settlers from Co Tipperary between 1815 and 1855 who settled in British North America should remind all students of the diaspora that no single destination was the sum total of choice available to those who were able to contemplate leaving Ireland. Miller's study of the US experience is a wide ranging synthesis which explores the very nature of the movement of so many people across the North Atlantic. The very title suggest that many people able to leave may have left for a range of reasons and their views as to why they were

in the USA may well have crucially influenced how, and to what degree, they settled down and made good.

Elliott's work is clearly the result of a major thesis. The footnotes alone take up almost a quarter of its length. But this study of a major element in Canada's ethnic mix is no huge catalogue of people and places. Using the techniques of genealogists, historical geographers, and social historians, Elliott traces the lives and fortunes of 775 families, to examine their socio-economic and geographic origins in order to explore why they emigrated, examines their land-holding to explore how they went about coping with their new surroundings, and finally looks at their movement within North America so as to comment upon their adjustment to life in Canada. A crucial theme is that of strategy. Just as emigration had been but one avenue open to the dissatisfied Irishman, so options within North America are explored. The family and its wider kinship linkages are seen to be crucial, for such linkages provided networks by which families came to know of opportunities, and then were able to take advantage of them. Migration was full of risk and each strategy possible had to be devised to minimise the chances of failure. But migration was only one of several strategies open families wishing to better themselves and particularly their families. Elliott's work is remarkable in that he goes beyond both the aggregated published census and the reaggregated data based on the manuscript census to explore the rich seam of genealogical information from which he is able to reconstitute family linkages within which he can then place individual biographies. Material that all too often, in other hands, serves up filially pious family histories is here used to make useful and sustainable wider generalisations about the lives of ordinary people in a new land.

Miller's work is probably more widely known, or if it isn't on this side of the Atlantic it ought to be, for his essay of much the same title has been in circulation since its publication in *Irish Historical Studies* in September 1980. The book's chapter titles are deceptively bland, with the exception of chapter 3: 'Continuity: the Culture of Exile', but contain discussion that should enlighten and enliven any debate on emigration at whatever level. Available now in paperback, it could even be used as a set text, especially important in a field in which so much that is written is only available in the USA and in hardback at great expense. Some may write this off as revisionist, as if anyone who looks beyond the myths and icons that grow up around traumatic events is little better than a grave robber. But history is surely nothing if it is not interpretation, publically presented, and inviting a response. May the responses be half so rigorous, imaginative and well-informed!

Stephen F Mills, Keele University

Todd Swift and Martin Mooney (eds): *Map-makers' Colours: New Poets of Northern Ireland*, Nu-Age Editions, Montreal, 1988, pb, 0-921833-10-5

The publication of this anthology acknowledges the edging towards centre stage of a new generation of poets in the North. That 'edging' doesn't imply shiftiness, or diffidence: far from it. These poets, mainly still in their twenties, take a wry and oblique stance to the matter of Ireland, and aren't in a hurry to put on the bardic cloak that for some of their immediate forerunners has become more of a Nessus shirt.

Medbh McGuckian (born 1950) leads the anthology of twelve poets and her influence on many of the younger of them is that of guide as well as poet. During her two year residency at Queen's from 1986 to 1988 a new group - not quite a new 'Group?' - of poets based there drew confidence from sharing work and ideas. Also included are three 'older' poets, i.e. in their thirties, who have recently moved into important editorial roles: Robert Johnstone and Ruth Hooley jointly edit *The Honest Ulsterman* and Brendan Cleary is a centre of publishing and promoting energy across the water in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

It was the youngest of all those involved, Todd Swift from Montreal, who arrived in Belfast early in 1987 and found the new generation of writers 'redressing [their country's] problems through emphasis on the positive elements of wit, style and beauty inherent in their poetry'. He and Martin Mooney worked on an anthology that was to be 'strictly provisional, indeterminate in its final relation to past or future Irish literary traditions'.

The result is an extraordinarily handsome book with substantial samplers from some of the most exciting poets I have read for a long time. Quirky, philosophical, surreal, tender, they have each already found a distinctive voice. Read John Kelly's 'The Lenin Mausoleum' alongside Heaney's 'Funeral Rites', or Ruth Hooley's 'Cut the Cake' just as it stands. It's a quite new poetic map of Ireland they are beginning to colour in.

Catherine Byron

Frank Litton (ed.): *Administration*, Vol. 35, No. 4, 1987, 'The Constitution of Ireland, 1937-1987, £6.00, 0001-8325; Brian Farrell (ed.): *DeValers's Constitution and Ours*, (The Thomas Davis Lecture 1987), Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1988.

In 1989 as debate rumbles on desultorily in the UK about political reforms that have been on the agenda since 1918 or before - a Bill of Rights, proportional representation - Ireland, enjoying these advantages, has steadily passed the fiftieth anniversary of the enactment of its second constitution, Bunreacht na hEireann.

These two texts were projected to celebrate the quinquagenary of the Constitution's enactment and despite some substantial overlap in focus (to be expected perhaps) and personnel (more surprising) they complement each other to such effect that despite areas of commonality I have no hesitation in recommending both of them for, at the very least, close attention. In any institution dealing with modern Irish history, politics

and sociology they should be seen as vital additions to the library. Their relevance, however, goes beyond Irish Studies and it is to be hoped that readers of this review will bring them to the attention of fellow tutors and students in law, politics and public administration, particularly the *Administration* volume. In the interests of brevity this review concentrates on only a few of the topics and authors covered by these volumes and readers should not conclude thereby that the texts themselves are similarly constrained.

Administration is the journal of the Institute of Public Administration, a body whose distinguished contribution to the development of Irish public life deserves itself some mark of recognition. This volume differs from that edited by Brian Farrell in that with fewer contributors (9 as against 14) but much the same length, there is more room for the individual contributors to develop their topics, though this is in no way intended as a criticism of Farrell.

The authors of the Litton-edited volume include five who later contributed to the Thomas Davis Lectures, but in the Litton volume the concern is more specialist, with most contributions sharing an overall focus on detailed exposition of how the Constitution has structured the interactions of the judiciary and the legislature.

In the Litton volume, Dermot Keogh provides an historical introduction to the framing of Bunreacht na hEireann, some material from which is inevitably repeated in his contribution to Farrell's text. Keogh's account of the making of the Constitution ('The Irish Constitutional Revolution: Analysis of the Making of the Constitution') is based on his detailed knowledge of the primary materials. It is exemplary in its thoroughness and undoubtedly deserves to become the standard short account of the making of the Constitution. Keogh's narrative lays out the process of planning, drafting and consultation in great detail, with, given his principle interests, an understandable concentration on the confessional aspects of the Constitution. What is most significant about Keogh's accounts in both volumes is that they show the extent to which Bunreacht na hEireann was DeValera's Constitution. He hand-picked those responsible for drafting, dealt with all details himself, drafts being circulated for comment to Departments and Ministers shortly before the text was finalised. In particular Keogh's documentation of DeValera's care to negotiate with delicacy the pitfalls of confessionalism (like trying to 'tattoo bubbles') and to secure Papal knowledge (not approval) of his intentions securely underpins Keogh's conclusion that DeValera was determined to ensure that he could not be outflanked by the Catholic right of contemporary Irish society. It may go against the grain to see DeValera as having eschewed strict Catholic orthodoxy in favour of - limited - pluralism but Keogh makes a convincing case for such a view.

In his contribution to the Litton volume, Mr Justice Brian Walsh gives one of the clearest expositions I have read of the differences between natural law and positive law - an student of constitutional law who goes into her finals without having read this is

handicapping herself needlessly! Walsh's paper shows how Article 6 of Bunreacht na hEireann, by stating that 'all powers of government, legislative, executive, and judicial, derive under God from the people . . . brings to the forefront the matter of fundamental law and the nature of fundamental rights in the Constitution'. The discussion which follows makes a compelling case for considering that that admixture of natural law with a written Constitution can offer a framework which can guarantee civil liberties while offering scope for future development.

The contributions to the Litton volume by Mr Justice Donal Barrington, Ronan Keane, Anthony Coughlan, Gerald Hogan, Enda McDonagh and JM Kelly are written to the same high standard and I hope that the IPA has plenty of stock or will reprint this issue which will be of lasting value to scholars.

The second and later (1988) volume is the product of a different but equally firmly established institution of Irish public life, the Thomas Davis Lectures. This volume, with 15 chapters, has a correspondingly wider focus than that of *Administration*. It is invidious to choose just one contribution from this collection but given the amount of overlap, difference inevitably commends itself as a criterion and Dr Yvonne Scannell's 'The Constitution and the Role of Women' is by that, or any scholarly criterion, outstanding.

Her chapter is both an acute reading of the Constitution and an account, from the legal and Constitutional standpoint, of the response to it of Irish feminists, and their general position over the period of its validity. She gives clear and compelling critique of a man-made Constitution which put into effect DeValera's 'vision of the role of woman in Irish society . . . as . . . a full-time wife and mother in an indissoluble marriage, having a 'preference for home duties' and 'natural duties' as a mother'. Her outline of how (some) Irish women in the 1960s and 1970s sought to escape from domesticity and powerlessness through the use of the courts' powers of judicial review is especially useful.

Dr Scannell's conclusion, that because of the incorporation for the capacity for judicial review 'the Constitution, though rooted in a patronising and stereotyped view of womanhood, may yet justify the claim that it is truly ours', suggest how well, on the whole, Bunreacht na hEireann has served and continues to serve the Irish people.

David Cairns, North Staffs Poly

RECENT AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

Margaret Barrington: *My Cousin Justin*, (intro. Ann Devlin), London, Virago, 1990, 1 85381 951 4, pb, £5.50

Rachel Billigheimer: *Wheels of Eternity: a Comparative Study of WB Yeats and William Blake*, Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1990, 0 7171 1603 4, hb, £27.50

Patricia Cockburn: *Figure of Eight*, Cork, Brandon, 1989, 0 86322 093 2, pb, £4.95

- Adele M Dalsimer: *Kate O'Brien: A Critical Study*, Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1990, 0 7171 1444 9, hb, £27.50
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- Joseph Sheridan LeFanu: *In a Glass Darkly*, Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1990, 0 7171 1779 0, pb, £4.95
- Adrian Frazier: *Behind the Scenes: Yeats, Horniman, and the Struggle for the Abbey Theatre*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990, 0 520 06549 2, hb, \$25
- Robert F Garrett: *Modern Irish Poetry: Tradition and Continuity from Yeats to Heaney*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989, 0 520 06603 0, pb, \$12.95
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- John Kelly (ed), Ron Schuchard (assistant ed): *The Collected Letter of WB Yeats, Volume III, 1901-1904*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990, 0 19 812683 2, hb £27.50
- Brendan Kennelly: *Love of Ireland: Poems from the Irish*, Cork, The Mercier Press Limited, 1989, 0 85342 888 3, pb
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- 2 February: Frank Harte: 'Songs of the People; the Expression of the Irish People in their Songs'.
- 9 February: Marianne Elliott: 'Tone and the Idea of an Irish Republic'.
- 16 February: Archbishop RHA Eames: 'Irish Anglicanism: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow'.
- 23 February: David Hill: 'An t-Slighe Mhor; the Great Road from Galway Bay to Dublin, 800-1987'.
- 2 March: Brendan MacLua: 'The Irish in Britain'.
- 9 March: James Milroy: 'The English Language in Ireland'.
- 16 March: Open Evening; an introduction to the Irish Treasures of the John Rylands University Library. The Open Evening will take place at the Deansgate Building of the Library at 7.00 pm.

BAIS REGISTERS OF ADULT EDUCATION TUTORS/ POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

The difficult task of compiling these registers is still underway. Please do send details to me if you wish to be included in either or both. These registers will be useful in formulating plans in both the adult and higher education spheres.

SEVENTH ANNUAL IRISH DIMENSIONS IN BRITISH EDUCATION CONFERENCE

By the time this *Newsletter* appears the Soar Valley conference will have taken place. Speakers will include Dr Christine Kenneally of the Ulster Historical Foundation and Dr Bob Purdie of Ruskin College, Oxford. A report of the conference will appear in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY OF BELFAST: SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

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Further details are available from: The Secretary (Graduate Applications), School of English, Queen's University, Belfast, BT7 1NN, Northern Ireland. The usual closing date for applications is 30th May.

ETUDES IRLANDAISES

Readers may be interested in *Etudes Irlandaises*, a bilingual journal of Irish history, civilisation and literature which appears bi-annually. The annual subscription is 150F; cheque and correspondence to : Monsieur l'Agent Comptable de l'Universite de Lille III, *Etudes Irlandaises*, B.P. 15, 59274 Marquillies, France.

WOMEN'S STUDIES GROUP. 1600-1825

Readers may be interested in the Women's Studies Group 1600-1825, which runs meetings on all aspects of Women's Studies and publishes a Newsletter. Anyone interested in joining or in attending the Group's meetings, dayschools and conferences should contact: Dr Yvonne Noble, 53, New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3DP, 'Phone: 0227-462471

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